A

RHAPSODY,

TO

E***** B**** Esq.

By J. SHARPE.

Ornamented with a humorous Print, of
"THE SWINISH MULTITUDE."

SHEFFIELD.
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RHAPSODY &c.

Be not riotous nor revengeful; laugh at an innocent joke, and seek redress for grievances by legal and peaceable means.

I Cannot gratulate the man believe me,
Who with a wily effort would deceive me;
So having read thy Essay with a frown
Tut, Mr. B**** said I, and laid it down.

But tell me B**** what was thy cause
To vindicate oppressive laws?
Say wert thou craving for thy toil,
The tribute of a royal smile?
Or was it merely thy intention
To flatter K***'s,
Those generous things,
For the comforts of a p-n---n?
Did a great person in a peaceful land,
Say, (as he grinning took thee by the hand,)
" A fever rages in the realm of France,
" Now should it e'er to this blest isle advance,
" There would be pretty work,
" Hæ Mr B****,"

If not ſo, thou haſt vainly thought
The page with pompous diction fraught,
Tho' void of truth in many a clauſe
Would from the world receive applauſe.
Then, pleas'd with this deluſive dream,
Choſe crippled Falſehood for thy theme,
And thought the bawd would be careſsſt,
When mantled in a flow'ry veſt.
But can the painter on an Ethiop's face,
Make features fair as northern dames unfold?
Or, will ſtale wines with ſweetneſs greet the taſte,
Drank from a goblet of the *pureſt* gold?

Thy verbal pomp, thy ſounding phraſes,
May court perhaps a pedants praiſes:
Yes, fools will praiſe in reaſon's ſpite,
For fools in fooliſh things delight.
Blind zealots too have often took
Their notions from a flimſy book,
As oft upon the meaneſt land,
On ſhallow ſoil, or burning ſand,
A fulſome weed with vigour glows,
Where better herbage never grows.
But ah! when penetrating ſages
Expect to read polemic pages,
And find no argument appears,
But every janty paſſage wears
The tinſel'd garb that fancy wrought,
And from her fairy regions brought,
To deck romance, her darling gueſt,
And rival fact when ſimply dreſt;
The inſult ſenſe diſdains to brook,
And to the ſhelf conſigns the book:
Thus when a vapour's liquid blaze
Upon the boggy moorland plays,
Or wantons in the neighb'ring brake,
Or darts its ſplendor on the lake,
Then for a moment quits the ſight,

And yields the empire to the night,
Or down the diſtant valley plays,
And meets the eye with fainter rays—
A while with ſteady glance the ſwain
Purſues the object o'er the plain;
But finding 'tis a treach'rous fire,
That dancing over marſh and mire,
Deceitful, would engulph the wight
And hood him with the lap of night,
He vows the bright unſolid bubble,
No more ſhall coſt him care or trouble.

Yet thou art thwarted ſince the Gallic nation
Diſdains to trumpet forth thy reputation,
And England's high-taxed realm diſcloſes
A ſcornful ſpirit,
And at thy fancy'd merit
We ſwell our lips and cock our noſes.
I grant 'tis hard thou ſhould'ſt have borne
The vile, unmannerly abuſes,
Of thoſe who thy dear book have torn,
And put the leaves to dirty uſes;
For well I know were I to ſee
A Grocer take my work and tear it,
To wrap his ſugar in and tea,
Good lack, good lack, I could not bear it.
Whene'er the muſe puts PAINE into my mind
She as a maſtiff this great man reveals,
And, lap-dog like, thou running bark'ſt behind,
In wide-mouth'd rage to---*nibble* at his heels.
Be wiſe now, pri'thee, and reſign the fight,
With lips contracted ceaſe thy puny din;
Leſt he with deep-ton'd howl, and furious bite,
Throttle thy treble pipes, and tear thy ſkin.
Elſe, hen-peck'd creature, extirpate thy fears
And go beat up for Grub-ſtreet garreteers,
To trim their quills, and fight in thy defence—

O then ye gods! ----But who muſt find the pence?
Courtiers muſt have their perquiſites and places,
And new aſſeſſments always cauſe wry faces.
Ah me! for Johnny Bull is very poor,
His fobs are empty, he can pay no more.
And our good **** has ſuch an offspring got.
Such Placemen, Friends, projectors, & what not
It is not likely he can ſpare a Shilling,
Or if he can, 'tis thought he won't be willing.
Did ſcribes a poll-tax pay, were wit aſſeſs'd,
Authors, perhaps would with his gifts be bleſt;
But he receives no money now from wit,
And that's the reaſon he gives none to it.
"Gives none to it?" ſome merry wag may ſay,
Has B**** got nothing for his labours, pray?
Fine talk——but though we heavy purſes crave,
And ever ply the frugal hand to ſave,
Sometimes neceſſity, an ill-bred lout,
Breaks in, and kicks the hoarded treaſure out.
In ancient times, (as old hiſtorians tell us,)
When Britain bred ſome diſcontented fellows,
Queen Nancy---heaven reſt her ſoul ſay I.---
Perceiving ſome unwelcome danger nigh,
One morn (obſerve ye) having ſmelt a rat, (what
She made new Peers, and gave---the lord knows
Which was a crafty trick I muſt confeſs——
And pray why ſo ſir?---- gueſs you blockhead gueſs.

But ſhould the man renown'd for famous ſpeeches,
Who unto foreign banks exports his riches,
Should he his nervous rhetoric diſplay,
And thus to thy opponent ſtammering ſay
" So Miſter *Paine*, ſo ſo, you're very bold
I'm told———
Here, now, you write your books on freedom--
That's quite too bad, it is indeed too bad,
Becauſe my lad,
If once the folk begin to read 'em,
'Tis ten to one but they go raving mad----
Egad----

But come, now, do ſir, do refrain,
Do Miſter PAINE-----
I pledge me worth your while to make it----
Here's for ye, look ye, here's a purſe of gold---
Here, here, here, here take hold———
Come, come, come, why don't you take it?
Perhaps you'd rather have a place,
Hæ ſir, hæ, is that the caſe?
Now don't be baſhful--- come--- explain,
I wiſh to ſerve you Miſter PAINE-
But if you ſlight my proffer'd grace,
Impriſonment ſhall be your ſentence;
Lord George's lodgings———that's the place,
Aye, aye, we'll bring you to repentance.

It is my creed, nor menace can arreſt,
Nor bribe allure, the virtues from his breaſt.
The great, the patriotic ſoul of PAINE,
Contemns the ſplendor of a courtly train;
Delights whene'er the low'ring brow of Fate
Frowns on the vultures in a morbid *ſtate;*
When righteous law the ſinking ſlave relieves,
And what diſtreſs requires compaſſion gives.

But doubtleſs B**** thy iron heart
Muſt feel a mortifying ſmart,
Since many a man of penetration,
Has on thy eſſay dealt damnation.
Lord, lord! methinks I ſee thee now,
Draw in the lip, and beat the brow;
Thy boſom lab'ring with a ſigh,
And anger flaſhing in thine eye;
Enough to make thee rant and bellow,
As GRIST does when he plays *Othello,*
And now to theſe with terms ſo rude,
Thou ſtil'ſt the *Swiniſh Multitude,*

To theſe poor ſouls in mean array,
I hear, or ſeem to hear, thee ſay,
" Ye pigs who never went to colledge,
Who muſt not paſs for pigs of knowledge,
Ye grunters who would fain be taken
To be as wiſe as fam'd Lord BACON,
Avant, ye filthy beaſts, avant
Dare ye to prate of what ye want!
To tell our *wiſdom* what ye need!
A very pretty tale indeed!----
Hence, beaſtly things of low condition,
Obedience learn, and meek ſubmiſſion;
'Tis meet your bones ſhould prop our pride,
And carry when we pleaſe to ride."

Now ſince thy teeming pen affords
Such honey'd flattery to Lords,
As if thou though'ſt this noble creature
Was form'd the darling of all Nature,
And ſent for higher ends to earth
Than mortals of a meaner birth,
Far better made to prop a nation
Than men of any other ſtation----
If I were to attempt to trace,
How at the firſt this lordly race,
To ſuch ſublimity aroſe---
The muſe would lead me to ſuppoſe
That all at firſt were pigs created,
And ſome to lordlings tranſmigrated.
That PLUTUS from the realm divine
Deſcending, ſingled out a ſwine;
And that his genius might prevail,
From off the rump he lopt the tail,
Tranſplanted it elſewhere inſtead
To grow and dangle from the head;
Then 'twixt his knees he held the paw,
And took a fine cœleſtial ſaw,
To amputate the hooves a-bit----
Which into twenty parts he ſlit;
This made th' improving beaſt diſcloſe
A ſet of fingers, thumbs, and toes,
Upright he rears, and has the power
To walk on two, inſtead of four.
Or with ſome duſt of brilliant hue,
Brought for the purpoſe from Peru,
The god atchiev'd a magic wand,
Which given to a monarch's hand,
It caus'd a necromantic charm,
To league upon the regal arm;
Then if it touch'd a briſly back
It did the buſineſs in a crack;
The pig became a Lord as ready,

As JOBSON's wife was made a Lady.
But now to wiſer heads I leave it,
And if they will they may believe it;
Afraid leſt ſome will ſay my diction,
Abounds, like thine, too much with fiction.

Some Lords will now delineate
Their origin of ancient date,
And counting back five hundred years,
Make out a lineage of Peers.
From which their precious clay aroſe----
Of courſe the braggarts muſt ſuppoſe
That high-bred dames in days of yore,
A ſpurious infant never bore,
But that they all were honeſt ever,
Now this if true is very clever.
But when a boaſting prig tells o'er
What his fore-fathers were before,
Preſuming that his pulſe retains
The blood which fill'd an hero's veins;
Who could refrain while thus he ſpoke,
To ſhew a ſneer, or crack a joke?
Unleſs ſome grave divine would ſwear
A group of Sylphs with endleſs care,
In phalanx form'd around the waiſt,
To keep a counteſs always chaſte,
Controul'd the love that would afford
Th' embrace to any but a lord.
But art thou fooliſh to believe,
When mortal monarchs pleaſe to give
Unto a fawning creature here,
The appellation of a Peer,
This vocal badge, this empty ſound,
Makes veins with better blood abound?
Inbreathes a ſoul more wiſe or brave,
Or damps the wiſh to be a knave?
Indeed I've heard old women tell,

That he who fears a witches ſpell,
Need only get a bit of *wiggin*
Which being worn among his rigging,
The ſecret virtues of the ſpray
Affright the wicked hags away
But though they ſay this bit of ſtick
Will foil the agents of old Nick:
Secure us from the ire of witches----
A pack of old miſchievous b---hes---
I ſay, if wiggin wards off evil,
And cuts connections with the devil;
Wilt thou affirm that titles can
Expel the devil from a man,
Give wit or valour to a nation,
Or ſhield the owner from temptation.

Amazement! that thou ſhould'ſt maintain
Theſe phantoms of an heated brain:
To let fallacious thought prevail,
For logic give a fairy tale;
To think an ignominious ſon
Should have the fame his father won;
And empty popinjays inherit,
The badge of worth without the merit.
And ſwell the climax to declare
Thoſe honours bright, and virtues rare,
Which ſeldom I have heard related,
Save when ſome author dedicated.

O wouldſt thou quell this ſenſe-inſulting rage,
Repulſe the Sophiſt, and careſs the ſage;
Recall thy pamphlet and an altar frame,
And to the paper put the furious flame
Then penitential, ſome kind aid invoke,
For all who weary, fainting, drag the yoke;
E'en as of old, the ſign would ſure be given,

Having purchaſed peace from angry heaven;
Thou ſhould'ſt ſee the light-wing'd fumes ariſe
And whirl aloft in haſte to kiſs the ſkies.

If conſcience bid religious ſects
To worſhip in a certain way;
And impious man, by law directs,
They to th' eſtabliſh'd church muſt pay---
If lazy vicars crown the board
With dainties and luxurious cheer,
While meagre curates preach the word
Of god, for thirty pounds a year----
If parents muſt be ſent to ſea
Reluctant captives of the preſs;
If millions were impell'd to be
The wretched victims of diſtreſs----
Thou woud'ſt extol the fate of ſuch a nation,
And deem a ſacrilege in reformation;
And if the ſubjects fed on mouldy cruſt
Thou would'ſt perſuade them that it were but juſt
Paſſive to bear oppreſſions throe;
Nay if it were the ſenate's pleaſure
Th' Exciſeman ſhould ſeize *all* their treaſure,
E'en thou would'ſt preach 'tis right that they
Should unreſiſting ſit and ſay
"Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law."

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